

sentiment of our people upon this occurrence; and I think it my duty, Gentlemen, to state to you the rules by which I shall be governed, if, unfortunately, against our experience, and my own trust in the sense of justice of the good people of this State, it should become indispensable to resort to military aid to enforce the law or maintain the public peace.

According to my understanding of that provision of the Constitution, which directs me to take care that the laws be faithfully executed, the Governor is invested with no new or unlimited *power*, but charged with a *duty*, to be accomplished by those means which the Constitution and laws strictly define. And that clause whereby the Governor is empowered to call out the military, to repel invasion, suppress insurrection, and enforce the execution of the law, does not, in my opinion, enable him to select a volunteer force unknown to the law; to charge military officers directly with the execution of the laws; or to assume the duties or discharge the office of a mayor or sheriff, with a military force under his command. And if he call out the military, and by his orders convert citizens into soldiers, when there is neither invasion, insurrection, nor forcible resistance to the execution of the law, he, in my opinion, violates the Constitution. I will, therefore, do none of these things. Above all I will carefully abstain from calling out or enrolling a military force on the eve of an election, when political animosities are agitating the minds of my fellow citizens, and when a display of such kind near the places of voting, forbidden by the laws, could only provoke violence and bloodshed.

We have seen, in the metropolis of the nation, on what was once part of Maryland soil, the dreadful results of a military interference at the polls; and the indignation which that act of blood inspired throughout the country, is sufficient to convince me that the hearts of men rise up against such tyranny, even when the letter of the law may be strained to shelter the act.

It will be for you to consider whether there is such omission in our statute book; and whether our laws can be so twisted as to connive at such proceedings. When our people shall contemplate with indifference a reckless exercise of military power; or a perversion of what was meant for defence against foreign aggression, into a weapon against our internal peace, they will have degenerated into the tools of military despotism, and deserve the fate of the miscalled republics of Mexico and South America.

The reverence for law and order, and for the ascertained popular will, which has always been the distinguishing honor of the American people, seems to be in danger of utter extinguishment by that violent spirit of party, which can invoke such means to overawe the free right of suffrage, and which may finally attempt to secure to itself the possession or continuance of power at the expense of civil war. When a violent faction shall have learned that such means may be used to secure success, their leaders will